

## The Need for a Classified Intelligence Budget

-The idea of an open intelligence budget flies in the face of the nature of intelligence, which is carried out in secrecy. An open intelligence budget that provided foreign governments, intelligence services and hostile groups with the overall figure that our Government is spending on its intelligence effort each year would also provide those governments and groups with a yearly insight into increases or decreases in that effort.

-On the other hand, an open budget would do little to add to a meaningful public debate in Congress about the nation's intelligence program and activities. Both the total figure and the year-to-year changes in the CIA budget would raise questions unanswerable on the floor of the House and Senate as to what activities are being carried out, and which programs are increasing and which are decreasing. There could be no meaningful debate about the budget without the disclosure of sensitive national security operations, programs, and information.

-Release of an overall intelligence budget figure would inevitably lead to demands for a detailed breakdown of appropriated monies, thus leading to disclosure of sensitive information. In 1947, for example, the Atomic Energy Commission's weapons expenditures were made public as a "one line" item. By 1974, these expenditures consisted of 15 pages of detailed explanation. The last publication on weapons expenditures, now under the Department of Energy entitled "The Atomic Energy Defense Activities", exists as Volume 1 of the "Fiscal Year 1985 Congressional Budget Request" and is a 654 page document.

-Intelligence is a secret business. No other government in the world publicly discloses its intelligence budget. The willingness of foreign liaison services to continue interchanges of great value to the United States could be adversely affected by an open budget. These services would not understand why funding for U.S. intelligence activities was being revealed, and they would be concerned that disclosure of the budget would lead to further revelations of budget figures, including amounts spent to conduct liaison activities with particular services. It would be difficult to reassure foreign liaison that their equities would be protected.

-Some would argue that an open budget is necessary in a democracy. However, the American people are adequately served in that the intelligence budget is carefully scrutinized by six committees of Congress (Intelligence, Armed Services, and Appropriations Committees) and all members of Congress have access to not only the overall budget, but to a detailed breakdown of specific programs. Given that debate on an open budget would be both limited and difficult to conduct in any meaningful fashion, the argument that democracy calls for an open budget is clearly outweighed by the adverse impact that such disclosure would have.